THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE

JAZZ INFORMATION

VOL. I, No. 7 OCTOBER 24, 1939 TEN CENTS

SQUIRREL ASHCRAFT RECORDS TO BE RELEASED BY H. R. S.

Dixieland Session in 1936 Featured Jimmy MacPartland

The Hot Record Society will soon release four sides recorded in 1936 by the Chicago Rhythm Club, Stephen W. Smith announced last week.

The records were made under the supervision of "Squirrel" Ashcraft and privately issued under the name of Jimmy MacPartland and his Squirrels. Titles are Panama, Eccentric, Original Dixieland One-Step, and Im All Bound Round The Mason-Dixon Line.

Ashcraft assembled the band for the date to settle an argument with Benny Goodman concerning the value of two-four time for jazz. MacPartland was trumpet and leader; others in the band were Joe Harris, trombone; Rosy McHargue, clarinet; Dick Clark, tenor sax; Jack Gardner, piano; Dick McPartland, guitar; Country Washburne, bass; George Wettling, drums.

The sides were made in the Chicago studios of the Decca company, and collectors have long demanded that they be released generally.

MACPARTLAND RECORDS FOR DECCA

Four Sides With Boyce Brown To Appear In Chicago Album

Jimmy MacPartland recorded four sides for the Decca album of Chicago style last week. The numbers were Sugar, The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise, China Boy and Jazz Me Blues.

Floyd Bean and Hank Isaacs, pianist and drummer of MacPartland's regular outfit, were the only members of his band who played on the date. Those added were Bud Jacobsen, clarinet; Boyce Brown, alto; Dick MacPartland, guitar; Jim Lannigan, bass.

Particularly interesting was the presence of Boyce Brown, sax player who has gained a great reputation among musicians and hot fans, although he appeared only once before on records.

HAWKINS RECORDS FOR VICTOR

Coleman Hawkins and his Kelly's Stable orchestra recorded for Victor last week. The tenor sax made Body And Soul, Funny That Way, and two Hawkins originals.

MUGGSY SPANIER AT NICK'S

JAM SESSIONS IN WESTCHESTER

A series of Sunday afternoon jam sessions is being held at the Green Haven Inn on the Boston Post Road, at Mamaroneck, under the sponsorship of Ernie Anderson and Bill Robson.

Last week's session, second of the series, featured Coleman Hawkins and Hot Lips Page. Billie Holiday appeared as guest star during the afternoon.

Page acted as master of ceremonies, and led a band consisting of Hawkins, Joe Marsala, Joe Bushkin, Artie Shapiro and George Wettling. Willie "The Lion" Smith played piano during the intermissions.

Zutty Singleton and Joe Sullivan are expected to play with the band next week at the affair, which runs from three to six o'clock. Also present, if schedules permit, may be Muggsy Spanier, Bobby Hackett, Miff Mole and Tony Pastor, and Billie Holiday will appear again.

ONYX OPENING OFF AGAIN

Re-opening of the Onyx Club, on 52nd Street, has again been postponed indefinitely.

Jimmy Mundy's band was scheduled to open the "Cradle of Swing" last week with Madeline Green as vocalist, but apparently license trouble has delayed the opening.

RASKIN, ZARCHY JOIN POWELL

Milton Raskin and Zeke Zarchy will have joined the Teddy Powell band by the time it makes its appearance at the Paramount Theater in New York this week.

Raskin left Gene Krupa's band to replace Powell's pianist, Mark Hyams. Zarchy, who joins Jerry Neary and Irving Goodman in the trumpet section, will be with the band only during its week at the theater.

HERMAN BACK WITH CROSBY

Max Herman is back in the brass section of the Bob Crosby orchestra after a three day absence, during which his place was taken by Johnny Napton. Herman supplanted Zeke Zarchy in the Crosby line-up.

CHICAGO TRUMPET BRINGS BAND TO PLAY OPPOSITE FREEMAN

Muggsy Spanier takes his band into Nick's Tavern tomorrow night (Wednesday) for his first New York appearance following his successes in Chicago.

The band finished a long run at the Panther Room of the Hotel Sherman recently, and reopened the Off Beat Club in Chicago before leaving for Nick's.

Spanier, considered by many to be the greatest of all white trumpet players, was widely known in Chicago before he joined Ted Lewis in 1929. After leaving Lewis, Muggsy played in Ben Pollack's orchestra on the West Coast for a short time. Last spring, after recovering from a long and severe illness, he formed the band which, with a few changes in personnel, he is bringing to New York.

Although definite confirmation was lacking, Jazz Information received from the General Amusement Corp., Muggsy's bookers, the following personnel: Muggsy Spanier, trumpet; George Brunies, trombone; Rod Cless, clarinet; Russ Fisher, tenor sax; George Zack. piano; Bob Casey, bass; Marty Greenberg, drums.

Bud Freeman's "Summa Cum Laude" orchestra will continue at Nick's with Muggsy. Zutty Singleton's Trio, featured at the Greenwich Village spot for some time, is now out.

This engagement brings together for the first time the two leading small white bands, and makes Nick's the second Village spot within two weeks to adopt a two-band policy.

WALLER OPENS AT FAMOUS DOOR

Fats Waller and his band opened at the Famous Door tonight (Tuesday), sharing billing with Maxine Sullivan. This is Waller's first 52nd Street engagement since the ill-fated Yacht Club run last year.

Personnel of Waller's band was not available at press time, but will probably include Slick Jones, drums; Herman Autrey, trumpet; and either Chauncey Haughton or Gene Cedric, tenor sax.

Pat Flowers was scheduled to be relief pianist for Waller at the Door, although this was unconfirmed as Jazz Information went to press.

JAZZ INFORMATION

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COLLECTORS' ITEMS

One of the most obscure record companies is Claxtonola, which was in business around the middle 20's in Iowa City. This was an independent concern, but it reissued some Gennett, Paramount and Black Swan masters on its own Claxtonola and National labels. The records were very sparsely distributed, and almost nothing had been known of them until Les Zacheis, of Cedar Rapids, ran across some copies in the company warehouse at Iowa City.

The details of the most important Claxtonolas are listed below. Under the name of the Jazz Harmonizers, there were issued six of the Original Wolverines' Gennett sides:

Oh Baby (11852) — Clax 40336
Copenhagen (11852) — "

Susie (11855A) — Clax 40339
Riverboat Shuffle (11854C) — "

Sensation (9079) — Clax 40375
Lazy Daddy (9080B) — "

The personnel of these is given in Hot Discography. The Lazy Daddy is definitely an alternate master from the one issued by Gennett.

The Bucktown Five's Hot Mittens (original, Gennett 5518) was issued on Claxtonola 40353. Personnel is Muggsy Spanier, cornet; Guy Garry, trombone; Volly De Faut, clarinet; Mel Stitzel, piano; Marvin Saxbey, banjo. The coupling, Steady Steppin' Papa, is by the Happy Harmonists, a different band.

Claxtonola also reissued, from Paramount masters, four sides by the Midway Garden Orchestra:

Tin Roof Blues (1535) — Clax 40272
Black Sheep Blues (1532) — "

Lots O' Mama (1533) — Clax 40273
Bobbin' Blues (1534) — "

The very early Fletcher Henderson Aunt Hagar's Children, on National 12222, was reissued from the Black Swan original. Another Henderson, My Sweetie Went Away, originally Paramount, appeared on National 12251. Finally, there's Jelly Roll Morton's Muddy Water Blues (Paramount) on National 12251.

* * *

John Schacht writes the following from Chicago:

"Apropos of the last sentence in the review of Benny Carter's Scandal In A Flat: 'Benny's best arranging, for our money, is found in such simple, effective works as Dee Blues.'

"The story of that date and that side was told to me, several years ago, by Horace Henderson. The band thought they had finished when they were told by the engineer that they had one more side. No one could think of what to play until someone suggested the blues. Hence Dee Blues, one of the rare unrehearsed, unarranged, spontaneous, completely improvised recordings."

Thank you, Mr. Schacht. Frankly, we were thinking of the other side of the record: the famous, and undoubtedly Carter-arranged, Chocolate Dandies Bugle Call Rag. But a question about Dee Blues suggests itself. Though unrehearsed and unarranged, must it necessarily be completely improvised? The atmosphere of the music is rather unusual for spontaneous blues.

* * *

Two blues artists who have made many records for the Bluebird race division are Speckled Red and Little Brother. Race catalogues being as hard to obtain as the records themselves, we take the liberty of reminding collectors of the existence of the following:

By Speckled Red: St. Louis Stomp -- Doin' The Georgia (7985); Take It Easy--You Got To Fix It (8036); Welfare Blues — Early In The Morning (8069); What Makes You Treat Me Mean -- Down On The Levee (8113).

By Little Brother: Misled Blues (7806); Vicksburg Blues No. 2 (7970); Louisiana Blues, part two -- Vicksburg Blues, part three (6697).

The only way to get these discs is to order by number, and persistently, until they arrive. St. Louis Stomp may be the easiest, since it has become a boogie-woogie classic. Little Brother's best known piano solo, Farish Street Jive, has even been transferred to Bluebird's pop list, No. 10177. Why should other records by the same artists be neglected?

* * *

Bill Riddle asks about Perfect 15753, by Duke Wilson and his Ten Blackberries, House of David Blues (E36936) - Red Devil (E36668). The blues, evidently, is the Melotone Henderson version. It seems likely that the Red Devil is also a Melotone original, by the Blue Rhythm Band. Also, who accompanied Viola McCoy on Romeo 302, I'm Savin' It All For You --- Papa, If You Can't Do Better?

A MILWAUKEE LETTER

Bill Davison Plays Chicago Style Trumpet In Wisconsin

The Chicago trumpet player Bill Davison, who led the last band in which Frank Teschmaker played, is now in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A letter to a correspondent in Milwaukee, asking news of Davison, brought the following reply..

"You ask about Bill Davison. I just wish you could hear him. He's not only a player in the 'Chicago style', but one of the guys who made the Chicago style what it was. He sounds like all the things I've heard about Bix, plus the drive and those beautiful lip trills, vibratos, or what have you, of Muggsy Spanier.

"Right now he is fronting a six night a week trio at the East Side Spa here in town, and Milwaukee offers nothing better. He plays that trumpet into a felt hat that's always falling off the stand, and the rest of the time uses a cup mute. He's the only trumpet player alive who can play an open trumpet (which he also does) without selling ear drum insurance first. And in all the time I've listened to him, I've yet to hear him play one jitterbug note.

"Another favorite trick of his is to reach down suddenly and pick up a mess of plumbing (valuation $3.00 under the sign of the three balls) which is called an Eb trombone. You can expect something dirty when he plays that, and you aren't disappointed...it cries. Comes a break where Hawkins or James might flash a dozen notes, and Davison picks out the three notes that belong there. Four measures later, where most guys could think of a couple of licks, he'll phrase an entirely original invention.

"Incidentally it's strictly Chicago, accent on the go, and while I was around I think I saw about one piece of piano music, and half of a vibe chorus, lying around somewhere else. The fellows in the band (when half a dozen other Joes aren't sitting in) are: Claude Regner, on the piano; Eddie McMullen, drums and vibes; Bill Davison, trumpet, Eb valve pump, and a couple of vocals. I am nuts about the guy, and the rest of the trio too."

— Elliot Wager.

NEW RECORDS

BUD FREEMAN and the Summa Cum Laude Orchestra (De 2781)The Sailfish --Satanic Blues. Max Kaminsky, cornet; Brad Gowans, valve trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Bud Freeman, tenor sax; Dave Bowman, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Clyde Newcombe, bass; Al Sidell, drums.

The Sailfish is an indication of the way in which Bud Freeman's personality has changed Chicago style to Nicksieland. It follows The Eel away from the jazz tradition, in the direction of gentle jive. It's pretty badly done, unfortunately, and solos by Kaminsky, Pee Wee and Bud contribute very little.

On the coupling, the Summa Cum Laude band makes a stab at Dixieland; the result is more interesting, naturally, and more successful. There's some trouble with the rhythm section, and the ensembles aren't entirely unified, but there is a certain drive, and the solos are better. The first chorus is by Bud, who begins with a sturdy try at the hot style and falls back on his rotary cliches. Pee Wee plays rather carelessly in low register, Dave Bowman turns in some nice piano, and Gowans plays a husky trombone solo.

JELLY ROLL MORTON'S New Orleans Jazzmen (BB 10442) West End Blues --Climax Rag. Sydney DeParis, trumpet; Fred Robinson, trombone; Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Happy Cauldwell, tenor sax; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; Lawrence Lucie, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Zutty Singleton, drums.

The second Jelly Roll Morton recording date was much less successful than the first, for a number of reasons. The two most evident are the absence of Sidney Bechet, and the substitution of Fred Robinson for Claude Jones on trombone. Most of the enthusiasm which, at the first date, accompanied the recording of the old New Orleans tunes, is missing here. In spite of a few good solos, the atmosphere of both sides is lackadaisical.

With the two previous Jelly Roll records around to show how the old style sounds, the value of this new coupling lies only in the tunes. West End Blues, especially, hasn't been recorded, except by Armstrong, in many years.

BOB CROSBY'S BOBCATS (De 2789) Peruna -- Washington and Lee Swing Bill Butterfield, trumpet; Warren Smith, trombone; Irving Fazola, clarinet; Eddie Miller, tenor sax Joe Sullivan, piano; Nappy Lamare, guitar; Bob Haggart, bass; Ray Bauduc, drums.

There's no reason to take these two college season novelties any more seriously than the Bobcats did. Peruna is actually a ballad tune, and its transformation into New Orleans parade music is queer. Everybody solos but the guitarist, poor Nappy.

CONNIE'S INN ORCHESTRA(Varsity 8042) Milenberg Joys --- 12th Street Rag. Probable personnel: Russell Smith, Bobby Stark, Rex Stewart, trumpets; Claude Jones, J. C. Higginbotham, trombones; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, Coleman Hawkins, saxes; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, bass; Walter Johnson, drums.

Reissued from the Crown masters, these two Fletcher Henderson sides, made in the early thirties, are no prize collector's items. Now that they're no longer rare, we ought to hear less about them. The ensembles are abominable, and only a few solos by Higginbotham, Rex and Hawkins have any interest. There are plenty of earlier and later Hendersons far more worthy of attention.

HOT CLUB OF FRANCE QUINTET (Royale 1753) Tiger Rag -- Dinah. Stephane Grappely, violin; Django Reinhardt, Joseph Reinhardt, Roger Chaput, guitars; Louis Vola, bass. Recorded in Paris, December 1934.

Two sides from the first record date of the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, repressed from Ultraphone masters and now released for the first time in America. Without denying Django's evidently great talent, we must admit that these are pretty awful. Quite aside from the difficulties encountered by an all-string jazz orchestra, the amateur standing of the musicians, as far as jazz is concerned, leads to fatal mistakes in tempo and rhythm --and the swing isn't here.

VARSITY AND ROYALE RECORDS

As this issue went to press, the Varsity and Royale records announced for October 12th hadn't been released. A few other miscellaneous records of this company came in, however, and are reviewed below.

52ND STREET BOYS, That's A Plenty; HOT CLUB OF FRANCE QUINTET, Oh, Lady Be Good (Royale 1754). That's A Plenty is a reissue from the Crown label, on which it was issued under the name of Joel Shaw's Orchestra. Actually the band is Gene Kardos'. We mention this only in case someone is puzzled by the name. There was no reason why this mechanical, unimportant recording should have been reissued. The coupling is from the same Ultraphone date as the other Quintet disc, reviewed above. On these three labels, by the way, the word Quintet has been omitted.

COUNT BASIE at the Piano (De 2780) Oh! Red--Fare Thee Honey Fare Thee Well. Count Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Joe Jones, drums.

Two more very typical slices of Basie rhythm. The Count's piano is a little too thin to sustain three minutes of music, even when backed by his own strong rhythm section.

(Continued on Page 4)

H. R. S.

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RECORDS

(Continued from Page 3)

IKEY ROBINSON and his Windy City Five (De 7650) "A" Minor Stomp -- Sunshine. A pleasantly arranged, rather sophisticated race record, reissued from Champion, on which Robinson (banjo) and an unknown alto and clarinet player star. Tressie Mitchell sings on the offside.

BLU LU BARKER, with Danny Barker's Fly Cats (De 7649) Marked Woman -- You Ain't Had No Blues. Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Buster Bailey, clarinet; and Danny Barker, guitar, help in supporting Blu Lu's comic, nasal blues singing. Charlie gets his hand in, as usual, in the concluding Onyxisms.

WASHBOARD SAM and his Washboard Band (BB 8270) Wa n't He Bad--This Time Is My Time. Pretty good blues singing, with accompaniment by alto sax, piano, guitar, bass, washboard. The pianist is particularly interesting.

HARLEM HAMFATS (Vo 05136) When My Love Has Come Down -- You Can't Win In Here. Unless you like Hamfoot Ham's blues singing, the main attraction here is a really superb blues chorus on alto sax, played by an unknown artist with genuine feeling and delightful simplicity. Otherwise, the record is poor, with a riffy ending which slows it down considerably.

LEROY'S BUDDY, Bill Gaither (De 7647) Army Bound Blues --- Kentland Blues. A blues singer accompanied by piano and bass.

OTHER RELEASES

BENNY GOODMAN (Co 35241)
Scatter-Brain
One Sweet Letter From You

HARRY JAMES (Co 35242)
My Buddy
Willow Weep For Me

JACK TEAGARDEN (Co 35245)
At Least You Could Say Hello
Stop Kicking My Heart Around

JOE BUSHKIN REJOINS MARSALA.

Joe Bushkin, formerly pianist with Muggsy Spanier, rejoined Joe Marsala's band last Tuesday night, when Marsala opened at Cafe Society, New York. Personnel of the Marsala band now is: Joe Marsala, clarinet; Marty Marsala, trumpet; Irv Barnett, tenor; Joe Bushkin, piano; Don Carter, drums; Earl Murphy, bass.

Joe Sullivan and Billie Holiday continue at Cafe Society. Personnel of Sullivan's band is: Joe Sullivan, piano; Murphy Steinberg, trumpet; Charlie Maxon, trombone; Pip Villani, clarinet; Charlie Berg, tenor; Burt Nazer, bass; Johnny Craig, drums.

Willie "The Lion" Smith is playing relief piano at the Cafe Monday and Tuesday nights, when one of the two bands is off.

THE BANDWAGON

Clarence Profit's Trio is now at the Village Vanguard on South Seventh Avenue. Besides Profit on piano, the trio includes Jimmy Shirley, guitar, and Ben Brown on bass.

Fletcher Smith is playing piano in Lennie Ware's Trio, at George's Tavern. Frankie Newton has been to the Pirate's Den quite often lately, to play the blues with Art Hodes. Nelson Williams, trumpet, sat in with Sinclair Mills' Trio at the MacDougal Tavern the other night.

Benny Carter and the Savoy Sultans playing the Savoy this week. On Sunday the Christopher Columbus band will be added...Teddy Hill is at the 125th Street Apollo, to be followed Friday by Tiny Bradshaw.

Last week the Golden Gate Ballroom booked the Original Dixieland Band Friday night, Red Norvo Saturday. This week the new Jay Faggen spot will see Van Alexander guesting Friday, and on Sunday Don Redman, Les Brown and Teddy Hill will supplement the regular orchestras, Andy Kirk and Teddy Wilson.

Charlie Spivack, featured trumpet with Jack Teagarden's orchestra, left him last week, as rumors had long predicted.... Benny Goodman, now playing the Waldorf, will be followed by Bob Crosby... Artie Shaw is at the Pennsylvania, Louis Armstrong still at the Cotton Club.

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